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AUTHOR Westbrook, Douglas; Watson, Hoyt F.
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ABSTRACT

The Fort Worth (Texas) Independent School District/North Texas State University professional semester for preservice teachers is described as an effective, organized, cooperative action program at the local level. Organization, objectives, and procedures are described, and examples of forms used in the student teacher center program are presented. (HJB)

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Douglas Westbrook
Associate Professor
North Texas State University

Hoyt F. Watson, Director
Office of Student Services
North Texas State University

COOPERATING TEACHER TRAINING PROJECT: FT. WORTH/NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Teacher Center Movement

"Every year sees a craze for some new solution to the new teaching enigma, at once simple and infallable... there is no cure so idiotic that some (educator) will not swallow it." H. L. Menckie 1922.

Attempting to live up to the expectations placed upon us, educators have historically tried different methods to prepare persons to be teachers. Too often we have responded with ill-advised enthusiasm to external demands for change that could not succeed within the present context. There can be no quarrel with the need for reform but it must be grounded on theory and contain professional knowledge that will stand the test of effectiveness as applied by beginning and experienced teachers.

Today we appear to be more than just flirting with new forms of collaboration and field-based instruction. Educational institutions are exploring ways for sharing their responsibilities with local education agencies, teacher associations, students and organized community groups. In many cases collaboration has been something of a "shotgun wedding," required by state licensing agencies and categorical federal programs. Today it is increasingly being negotiated at the insistence of teachers and school administrators. All of these parties are dissatisfied with teacher education as it has been.

Collaboration is not a new idea. The history of teacher education is filled with earlier attempts to reach this goal. The notion of organized cooperative action at the local level in educational personnel development

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surfaced decisively in the U. S. with the 1948 report of the so-called Flowers Committee; a sub-committee of the Committee on Studies of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. This report pointed out the need to change the setting for educational personnel development from the institution to the local consortium, involving all partners in the American educational system - the community, elementary-secondary education, higher education, and the state.

Several national groups took up the mission started by the Flowers Committee. Included are such groups as the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Educator's Sub-Committee on School-College Relationships in Teacher Education, which published several reports including "Partnership in Teacher Education"; and the Joint Committee on State Responsibility for Student Teaching, which published the little green book, Who's In Charge Here? and the little brown book, A New Order in Student Teaching. Many other publications relating to this general topic were released in the 1950's and 1960's by such interested groups as the Teacher Education and Professional Standards Commission and the American Association for Student Teaching (later to become the American Association of Teacher Educators.)

The 20 years from 1950 to 1970 was a period in which local, state and national groups in this country were trying to hammer out a local cooperative structure involving all partners in the American educational system to form the setting for continuous educational personnel improvement.

St. John's University developed a definition of a cooperative structure which seems to be very appropriate for our purposes. "A Teacher Education Center

is created when a school or schools agree to work cooperatively with a University for a specific period of time. The university supervisor becomes a clinical professor spending the greater part of their time in the school(s) working with the school staff and students assigned to them from the university. School administrators, classroom teachers, university students and university staff together discuss the functioning of the program. These four groups constitute a team for planning experiences, reporting progress and evaluating results." This definition seems to fit what we are trying to do with the project that will be described.

A STUDENT TEACHER CENTER

It should be safe to assume that all teacher education centers are established because of the need to improve pre-service and in-service teacher performance. Those individuals who have had experience at all levels of teacher education have known for a long time that upgrading teacher education was imperative. The Ft. Worth Professional Semester was created to satisfy this need.

There were several factors which we deliberated before developing the final format for this project. There are projects where the professors work fulltime five days per week in the public school setting. This isolates them from the university campus and all the activities that go on there. They become the "forgotten ones" when it comes to being involved in committee work, program development on campus and other such activities. Also, they do not have the time to carry on the research and writing activities to the extent that are necessary and required by most major universities. This can be a detriment to them in attaining promotion, tenure and merit pay. Also in this kind of project students are asked to spend much more of their time than they would in a

regular program operated on campus. Sometimes this creates a great deal of resentment. We wanted to develop a program which would be better than the one now in operation, but would be fair and equitable to all concerned - students, professors and school districts. Therefore, if the program proved successful it could easily be expanded.

In order to create the Ft. Worth Professional Semester (student teaching center) four tasks needed to be accomplished:

1. Permission from Ft. Worth I.S.D. and N.T.S.U. Education Department to establish the center.
2. Submit semester plans to Ft. Worth I.S.D. and N.T.S.U. Education Department for their approval.
3. Selection of a student teacher center (cluster of schools).
4. Contact all secondary education majors who are eligible for the semester and enroll those who are interested (after a personal interview).

Starting with the Spring Semester, 1977, the Ft. Worth Independent School District and the College of Education, North Texas State University began operating a program whereby a group of students preparing to be secondary school teachers would be in the public schools full time for the semester. During this semester the students receive credit for 15 semester hours. These semester hours correspond with three required courses (9 semester hours) plus student teaching (6 semester hours) at N.T.S.U. During the first eight weeks, the students are required to meet with an instructor from 8 to 11:30 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday for classroom instruction in the areas of "The Adolescent in School and Society," "The Nature and Conditions of Learning,"

and "Secondary School Curriculum and Methods." (N.T.S.U. course titles). From 12:30 - 2:30 the students are assigned to a public school teacher to do active observation/participation. The student is required to do this for 40 hours in their first teaching field, followed by 40 hours in their second teaching field. Variations of this are possible, such as 40 hours in a secondary school and 40 hours in a middle school, etc. Also, during the 1st 8 weeks students are taken on field trips to various places (educational service centers, A.V. workshops, consortium centers, school district media centers, etc.)

An objective during the first 8 weeks is for students in the project to observe several different teachers. Students are asked to report to teachers who are department heads at the beginning of the semester. The head of the department and the student confer and a schedule for observation/participation is arranged. The schedule is one which places the student with one or more teachers in the department for a broader experience. This prevents haphazard observations which could be of questionable value.

During the second eight weeks of the semester the students perform the normal function of student teaching under the supervision of the same college faculty member and usually the same public school teacher that supervised their observation time (1st 8 weeks). The time element for student teaching is for the entire school day, five days each week.

Students and teachers in the project are given guidelines to follow for each of the two phases of the semester. Everyone knows what is expected of him and thus, less frustration occurs. Students are encouraged to be professional, sincere, and mature from the first day and since they are in a public

school setting for the entire semester they tend to follow this requirement with ease. College educators and classroom teachers are encouraged to utilize the best teaching methods, especially when students are observing. In fact, principals voluntarily report that instruction has improved since the project began.

An attractive feature of the project is that principals and classroom teachers are invited into the seminars as guest speakers or resource persons. It seems to be very meaningful to the students to have a teacher at the "battle-front" tell them firsthand how things really are.

A by-product, which is very attractive, is that students in the project are very close for sixteen weeks. They establish close relationships and friendships that are warm and friendly. They help each other and they often say, "we would never get to know students in our other college classes as well or have as much fun together as we do in this semester," this is a plus for the project.

Another by-product is that the classroom teachers in the schools, where the student teaching center is operating, have voluntarily written letters and/or orally praised the project. They are happy to see universities actually doing some school based experiments to upgrade teacher education.

The college instructor is expected to work with the program at the Ft. Worth site three days each week. This leaves two days for him/her to perform the other professional activities normally expected of a university faculty member (research, writing, service work, committee work, etc.) Also, it allows the person to be on campus these days and somewhat reduces the feeling of separation from other faculty members and campus activities.

The following forms are used in connection with the Ft. Worth Student Teacher Center.

TO: Teachers who accept NTSU interns (pre-student teaching students)

FROM: Douglas C. Westbrook

RE: Supervising interns

Any teacher with a current, valid certification and bachelor's degree in his/her teaching field is eligible to accept an NTSU intern. Intern may not be the correct identification but they are students enrolled in one of North Texas State University's Professional Semesters. These students are enrolled for three college classes and student teaching. They will earn 15 hours college credit and will intern for approximately 1/5 of the semester. These interns and the NTSU faculty need your help.

We are aware of the commitment made by your school to participate in this Professional Semester and we appreciate your assistance. We are also aware of your obligations and responsibilities to your students and your administrators and we will at all times try to be completely understanding of your priorities. We urge you to request an intern if you desire one, but you do not need to feel any obligation to participate. The intern in your room should be helpful to you, but will require some of your attention. The helpfulness you receive should outweigh any disadvantages.

The teacher who considers accepting an intern should know what will be required.

1. The intern is not a student teacher, but will be doing student teaching shortly.
2. The intern will assist you as a requirement for Ed. 345 and Ed. 349.
3. He will be given specific student behavior to observe while in your room. Therefore, it is recommended that 1/4 of his time be spend in observing.

4. For a specified amount of time they will intern in their first teaching field (4 weeks) and in their second teaching field (4 weeks).

5. Plan a weekly conference with your intern.

6. Orient the intern about your personal and teaching objectives for the classes they will work with.

7. Alert the intern to the intellectual abilities of your students (grade level, etc.).

8. Show the intern your planning procedures, your testing procedures, your classroom control strategies, your teaching methods, your record keeping requirements, etc.

9. Require the intern to do some paper grading, some ditto work, some test administration, and many other routine duties.

10. Allow the intern to do individual instruction of slow, average, and accelerated students.

11. Allow the intern to teach small groups in some <u>well planned</u> lessons.

12. Allow the intern to instruct the whole class, if permissable.

13. Allow the intern to operate audio-visual equipment, when feasible.

14. Insist that the intern be punctual, regular, courteous, professional and sincere.

15. Enjoy your semester and, thanks a million!

APPLICATION FOR PLACEMENT IN PROFESSIONAL SEMESTER
Ft. Worth Project

Semester_____ Year_____

I hereby apply for placement in a professional semester, understanding and accepting the following program conditions.

1. The program will involve enrollment in Education 345, 349, 405H, 410H, and 411H and will require participation in the entire fifteen-hour package.

2. A faculty team from North Texas State University will instruct seminar type classes and will supervise the in-service activities of the group.

3. The entire program will be conducted on location in selected public schools in Ft. Worth.

You will be contacted at a later date to come for a personal interview. Please keep the Student Teaching Office (Room 164) notified of your current address and phone number.

PLEASE PRINT

Name_____ SS#_____

My teaching field(s), listed in order of preference_____

_____

My North Texas address:_____

Phone:_____

My holiday address:_____

Phone:_____

Expected date of graduation:_____

TO: Students enrolled in the Fort Worth Project

FROM: Dr. Westbrook

1. Be sure to make formal application for student teaching in room MH164, Matthews Hall (Education Building) with Dr. Williamson.
2. Be sure your TB clearance is filed with him--now.
3. You have already registered with me. So, you are in the project.
4. At registration, be sure you get class cards for EDSE 345, 349, 405H, 410H, and 411H that are for the Fort Worth Project.
5. Buy your textbooks for EDSE 345, 349, and 405H.
6. Report to Meacham Middle School Auditorium at 8:30 a.m. the first day of classes _____.
7. You will be given time to organize carpools for commuting on the first day of class. Allow 45 minutes travel time.
8. The school principals ask that you not wear jeans.
9. If you have decided not to join the project, please contact me immediately.
10. If you have any questions feel free to come by my office (MH238, phone #788-2231 ext. 273) or call my home 387-0410.

See you next semester!

FORT WORTH PROFESSIONAL SEMESTER 1977

Things to do

1. T.B. clearance slips need to accompany student teaching applications to Ft. Worth.

2. Make application for student teaching with Dr. John Williamson - MH164--NOW!

3. Register for the Professional Semester as you would ordinarily. There will be sheets with Ed. 345, 349, 405H with pencil headings "Fort Worth Project". The persons working these tables will put your name on these pages and then hand you your class cards. The same for Ed. 410H and 411H.

4. Classes begin at 8:15 a.m. January 17, 1977 in the auditorium of Meachum Middle School in Ft. Worth.

5. You may begin discussing possible car pools at the conclusion of this meeting.

6. I have a map for you to take with you. It is expertly drawn and should get you to the school with no trouble. (If yor're smart!)

7. You may park on the street next to the school. Please do not park right in front, but a little way away from the main entrance. Do not park in the small Teacher Parking Lot--there is not enough room for them and us.

8. Lunches in the cafeteria are about 80¢. There is a small cafe near the schools.

9. Please use Boy or Girl restrooms because the lounges are too small.

10. Smoking is permitted in the Boiler Room end of the building.

11. DRESS:
    MEN: Comfortable sport pants and shirt - a coat and tie occasionally - no jeans.
    WOMEN: Pant Suits or dresses - comfortable fit - no jeans. Keep hair out of your eyes - let us see your face. Be neat and clean.

12. We have been invited to try our experimental semester in this school. The principal and his staff have rolled out the red carpet for us. Let's show them that we appreciate the invitation by being punctual, pleasant, professional <u>in all situations</u>. I do not intend to embarrass you by my behavior. I invite you to be sincere and helpful to students, faculty, administrators, visitors, just everybody. EVERYBODY!

13. We will plan our break at a time when the rest of the school is in class.

14. Class schedule.

15. Other

<u>For your information--</u>
Ft. Worth has been requesting a professional semester for 2 years. I have wanted to supervise such a semester for some time and I am excited that we are at last getting started. This is planned to some degree, but alterations may be necessary as we go along. Your suggestions are welcome. Lets enjoy it!

TO: Principals and faculty members participating in the Fort Worth Project

FROM: Dr. Doug Westbrook - N.T.S.U. Director of the Fort Worth Project from N.T.S.U.

In order to evaluate and improve our project, I need input from you. Would you please fill out this form and return it to your school secretary?

	YES	NO
Was the operation of the Fort Worth Project an obstacle to the regular functioning of the school?	____	____
Was it inconvenient to have a teacher intern in your room as a regular observer/aide?	____	____
Were the university teacher educators professional?	____	____
Were the university teacher educators easy to talk with?	____	____
Did the university teacher educators appear to be interested in their work?	____	____
Did the university teacher educators appear to be interested in your school?	____	____
Were the university teacher educators competent and capable?	____	____
The objective of this project is to do a better job of training teachers. Have you supervised student teachers before?	____	____
If students came to you for student teaching who were in the project, did they perform more competently than those student teachers who were not in the project?	____	____
Do you believe this method is an improvement over the traditional method of teacher training?	____	____
Would you be in favor of continuing the project in your school?	____	____
Would you accept a student intern in your class again?	____	____

In the space below, please identify your suggestions for project improvement:

EVALUATION OF NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT INTERNS

Student Intern _____ Classroom Teacher _____

The student who has been serving in your room as an intern for the past few weeks will soon end his work. I would appreciate your honest reaction to the questions below concerning the student.

	Please check one ( ) Yes	No
Has the student been dependable?	_____	_____
Has the student been punctual and regular?	_____	_____
Has the personal appearance of the student been acceptable?	_____	_____
Has the classroom manner of the student been acceptable?	_____	_____
Has the student been helpful to you?	_____	_____
Does the student appear to be genuinely interested in pupils and teaching?	_____	_____
Does the student work well with pupils and teachers?	_____	_____
Does the student have sufficient basic knowledge of the subject matter for a beginning teacher?	_____	_____
In your opinion, should the student be encouraged to continue his pursuit of a teaching certificate?	_____	_____

I have sincerely appreciated your valuable assistance this semester.

Many thanks!

When you finish checking the items above, please leave this form with your school secretary.

TO: N.T.S.U. students enrolled in the Fort Worth Project

FROM: Dr. Doug Westbrook

In order to make future plans and to evaluate the Fort Worth Project, I need input from you. Would you please fill out this form and return it to me.

	YES	NO
Was the operation of the project in Fort Worth an inconvenience to you?	____	____
If your answer to the above question was "Yes" do you consider the inconvenience worth the effort?	____	____
Was the amount of time required for class attendance, observation, and homework too great for 15 hours credit?	____	____
Was the amount of time required about the same as it would have been on campus for 15 hours credit?	____	____
Was the semester challenging to you?	____	____
Were the morning seminars informative and beneficial?	____	____
Were the courses taught in the morning seminars relevant to your future teaching?	____	____
Were the required observation/participation assignments worthwhile?	____	____
Were the observation/participation assignments an improvement over the method used on campus?	____	____
Were administrators and faculty members in Fort Worth friendly and supportive?	____	____
Do you feel that you will be better prepared for student teaching because of your experiences in this project?	____	____
Would you recommend this type of semester to other secondary education majors?	____	____

I sincerely request that you write below your suggestions for improving this project:

TO: Fort Worth Project Teachers

FROM: Doug Westbrook (NTSU)

RE: Evaluation of Interns

In a few days, your intern will be finished with his work with you. Would you respond to the questions below concerning the performance of your intern. Please leave the completed form with your school secretary.

	YES	NO	NON-APPLICABLE
Has the intern been on time each day?	____	____	_____
Has the intern been dependable?	____	____	_____
Has the intern been willing to participate in the projects you planned for him?	____	____	_____
Has the intern displayed a good attitude toward school students, work and teachers?	____	____	_____
Has the intern been helpful to you?	____	____	_____
Has the intern worked well with individuals, small groups, and classes?	____	____	_____
Has the intern operated the ditto machines, the 16 mm projectors, etc.?			
Has the intern assisted in your test construction and grading?	____	____	_____
Does the intern appear eager to begin student teaching?	____	____	_____
Would you recommend that he remain in teacher education?	____	____	_____

Your participation in my project is deeply appreciated. Thanks, so much.

_____ _____ _____

Teacher Intern Last Day